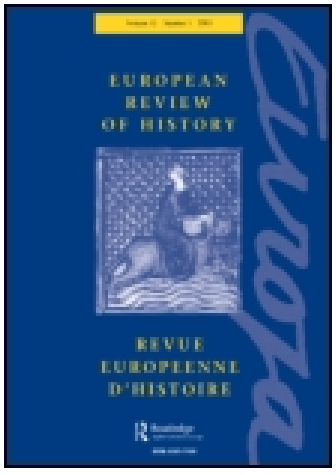

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One continent, one language? Europa Celtica and its language in Philippus Cluverius' Germania antiqua (1616) and beyond

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One continent, one language? *Europa Celtica* and its language in Philippus Cluverius' *Germania antiqua* (1616) and beyond

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Today's European Union is keen to point out that one of Europe's main characteristics is its linguistic diversity. Some early-modern scholars, however, emphasised the notion of European monolingualism, even though Europe's linguistic diversity was as obvious in the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries as it is today. These scholars advanced the argument that, in a distant past, Europeans had spoken one single language. This article focuses on the first scholar to really substantiate this idea. In his voluminous *Germania antiqua* (1616), the Leiden founder of historical geography, Philippus Cluverius, set out to prove that Europe had once largely been populated by people who shared one single language and a set of distinctive customs. After analysing Cluverius' argument and his linguistic image of Europe, the article will outline the intellectual background behind his claims and map his work's impact on later representations of Europe in terms of language. Even when most early-modern scholars admittedly rejected the idea of Europe as a historical linguistic unity, the paper will show that the notion of Europe was a crucial point of reference in the linguistic scholarship of the early-modern period.

Keywords: Philippus Cluverius; idea of Europe; monolingualism; language; Celts

Introduction

In 2008 a concise booklet entitled *Travel the Universe of Greater Europe* was issued under the auspices of the Council of Europe. It was presented as an adventure book for children between the ages of six and 10.[1] The young readers are taken on a journey through the European galaxy, during which they gradually come to grips with Europe's multifariousness. 'Identity through diversity' is the chief lesson to be learnt: 'All in all, if there wasn't a multitude of contrasts in Europe, it wouldn't be Europe!'[2] The question 'Do you speak European?' is answered: 'European is not a language. Europe is a treasure trove of over 200 languages.'[3] This is why readers are encouraged to learn several languages from the European member states. The example illuminates that today, Europe's multilingualism is considered to be at the very heart of European distinctiveness, even though some scholars wonder if this language policy may be 'side-lined or even removed from the political agenda in the midst of financial turmoil occasioned by the Eurozone debt crisis'.[4] Nor from a genealogical perspective could Europe be considered a linguistic unity. Today we know that the languages spoken in Europe have not sprung from a common source. Although a vast number belongs to the Indo-European language family, Basque (an isolate language) and Estonian, Finnish and Hungarian ('Finno-Ugrian languages') are some odd ones out. Nor is the Indo-European language group, as the name indicates, confined to what we would call 'Europe' today. In other words, Europe, today proudly multilingual, has never been a homogenous continent from a linguistic point of view.

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A quick glance at Figure 1 reveals that, unlike the authors of the children's book, early-modern scholars have not always been that eager to pay tribute to Europe's multilingualism. Abraham Ortelius' remarkable historical map of Europe indeed suggests, as we will see, that the entire area of Europe had been populated by Celts, basically speaking one and the same language. It is the aim of the present article to examine to what extent early-modern authors have represented ancient Europe as a principally monolingual continent. Its focus will be on an exceptional scholar, who partially followed in Ortelius' footsteps. Unlike Ortelius on the verso of his map, Cluverius in his voluminous *Germania antiqua* ('Ancient Germany') (1616) went into detail to defend the idea of Western Europe's historical linguistic unity. Before assessing to what extent Cluverius' representation of Europe was characteristic of his age, his representation of Europe will first be analysed with particular attention to the question of how he used linguistic arguments to substantiate his views.

Philippus Cluverius: *Europa Celtica, lingua Celtica*[5]

Philippus Cluverius (Klüver) led a colourful life, about which we are mainly informed by Daniel Heinsius' 1623 obituary speech.[6] Born in Danzig in 1580, Cluverius swiftly became a man of the world. Focusing on his exceptional linguistic commands, Heinsius states: 'Next to the scholarly languages, he mastered Dutch, Czech, Polish, Italian, Hungarian, English and French. This is why he seemed to be a foreigner nowhere and a

Figure 1. *Europam, sive Celticam veterem sic describere conabar Abrah. Ortelius*. The map was first printed in the *Parergon* of Abraham Ortelius, *Theatrum orbis terrarum* (Antwerp, 1595). Source of this uncoloured and isolated map: Bibliothèque nationale de France, CPL GE DD-2987 (9721) (via *Europeana* and *Gallica*, Public Domain)

native everywhere.'[7] Cluverius himself recalled how he enjoyed the company of some cultivated Florentines and a scholar from Bologna on his way through Italy: 'While I intensively discussed with the Florentines about Italian affairs in Italian, the doctor from Bologna did not sufficiently grasp their dialect and hence asked me time and again what on earth they were talking about. I responded, not without laughing, that it was not fair that he was making an appeal to me, a foreigner, for interpreting Italian while himself being Italian.'[8] If true, this anecdote illustrates that Cluverius was anything but an armchair scholar. All the same, he had enjoyed rigorous academic training at the University of Leiden, which was still a strong pole of attraction for German Protestant students. After his matriculation in 1601 he studied with the renowned scholar Josephus Justus Scaliger (1540–1609), who had advised him to break off his studies in law and to conduct pioneering studies in historical geography instead.

Travelling through England, France and Italy, Cluverius practised science 'by walking', thus measuring the stories of ancient historians and geographers against his own observations: a rather unique match of classical text-based learning and empirical fieldwork. Hence, he did not shrink from radically questioning the authority of both classical and contemporary authors. Yet he regarded as sacrosanct and inviolable the text of the Bible. In 1616, Cluverius was appointed *Geographus academicus* or 'academic geographer', a paid *ad hoc* position at Leiden University. In the same year his book *Germania antiqua* was published[9], followed by *Sicilia antiqua* 'Ancient Sicily' in 1619. He was not able to enjoy the enormous success of *Italia antiqua* 'Ancient Italy' and *Introductio in universam geographiam* 'Introduction to Universal Geography', both published in 1624 with various reprints, as he died on the very last day of 1622.

The starting point of Cluverius' *Germania antiqua* is a synoptic edition of Tacitus' *Germania*, the rediscovery of which had sparked long-lasting excitement among scholars in Western and Northern Europe thanks to the positive assessment of the Germans' moral standards it contained.[10] Facing Justus Lipsius' (1546–1606) authoritative edition Cluverius presented his own edition of Tacitus, who is consequently styled *auctor noster* ('our author') throughout the remainder of the book. Very systematically structured (judged by humanist standards at least), it offers an interpretation of Tacitus' work as well as a reconstruction of the sociocultural world of the Germans. With respect to the original Germanic religious system, 'Tacitus has employed a few lines', Edward Gibbon wittily remarked, 'and Cluverius one hundred and twenty-four pages.'[11] Along with, and partly thanks to, the inspiring illustrations[12], Cluverius' work impacted greatly on the conceptualisations of prehistoric Europe.[13]

Language played a key role in Cluverius' idea of history. He himself explained this linguistic concern. Analysing and comparing languages, Cluverius argued, directly contributes to the study of the remote history of the earliest migrations of ethnic tribes: 'The set of principles and evidence relying on which one can discern whether two or more nations (*nationes*) are of the same kind and origin is chiefly of twofold nature. The first is language or tongue, the second customs and way of living.'[14] Cluverius thus continued in a fairly recent research tradition that was most probably initiated by Jean Bodin (1530–96) and later famously elaborated on by Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz (1646–1716).[15] In order to understand Cluverius' representation of Europe as an original linguistic unity, the following will attempt to structure his views on the origin and interdependence of languages as expressed in his book.

Cluverius posits one original language that was universally spoken in the earliest history of mankind.[16] Whereas most of his contemporary colleagues, in line with the Augustinian tradition, were convinced that this original language was Hebrew, Cluverius

argued that the primeval language had vanished in the disaster of Babel. In doing so, Cluverius initiated a relatively new theory in the early-modern *respublica litterarum* (Republic of Letters). This stance, however, was not entirely new, for most Early Christian Greek authors had been reluctant to make firm claims on the primeval language – the few indications in the Biblical text in this respect are vague and open to a wide range of interpretations. Nevertheless, a widely held consensus on Hebrew as the protolanguage emerged in the exegetical scholarship of Early Christian Latin authors, which had gained firm authority ever since.[17]

Cluverius, however, nonconformistically rejected the idea that his own Germano-Celtic language, along with the other languages of the world, was to be derived from Hebrew. In his opinion, the very fact that the names found in the oldest books of the Old Testament (e.g. Abraham, Isaac, etc.) are Hebrew did not convincingly demonstrate that this was also to be considered the primeval language. Either the Hebrews had translated these names into their new language, or they had made use of some remains of the primeval language.[18] This demonstrates that Cluverius, by adhering to the literal text of the Bible, emphatically dismissed several doctrines that had later on been developed, such as Hebrew being the original language.

All the same, the nature of the primeval language would not remain unknown forever. Cluverius argued this was the case for two reasons. First, the original language would be reintroduced to mankind upon the return of Jesus Christ to earth. Second, God had not created entirely new languages at Babel. He just had confused and scattered the original language into various idioms and dialects.[19] This confusion (or fragmentation) resulted in the emergence (or reconstitution) of 69 languages allotted to Noah's grandsons, all of whom had preserved some remains of the Adamic language and had undergone some additional changes and fragmentation throughout time.

In view of this basically monogenetic model – 'no one would easily deny that all languages of the world simultaneously have sprung from one single origin and from one and the same stock'[20] – Cluverius was not surprised to find that the most diverse languages spoken on earth, including the Amerindian languages, did share a set of words having both a similar form and meaning.[21] So, for instance, he equated Greek *pous* with Lat. *pes* and Germ. *fuus*. Latin *oculus* is compared with German *Auge* and Slavonic *oko*. But Cluverius also involved languages such as Egyptian, Hebrew, Arabic and Chinese in his comparisons. Implicitly, Cluverius suggested that in particular theonyms, or names for gods, had been preserved in most of the world's languages. After examining the Germanic equivalents of the word 'sun' in a large number of other languages, he noticed that all languages discussed made use of a pre-Babelic word denoting God.[22] In view of the large number of correspondences detected between the world's languages, it would not be fair to account for these parallels by invoking coincidence, Cluverius argued.[23] Nor did it appear plausible that one of these languages had been derived from another.[24] Each of these peoples/languages, originated at Babel, had populated a specific part of the world. In *Germania antiqua*, Cluverius focuses especially on the Celts, who are considered to be the pedigree of Ashkenaz, Japhet's grandson (see Figure 2).[25]

It was Cluverius' firm conviction that Europe was to a large extent homogenous from both an ethnic and a linguistic point of view:

> Our people (*gens nostra*) does not owe its first origin to Greece, Persia, or another place numerous centuries after the flood and the division of languages. On the contrary, immediately after the very division of languages and the dispersion of peoples as a consequence of the building of the city of Babylon, our people was led by Ashkenaz, Noach's great-grandson, along with a new language to that part of Europe that was later called '*Celtica*'.[26]

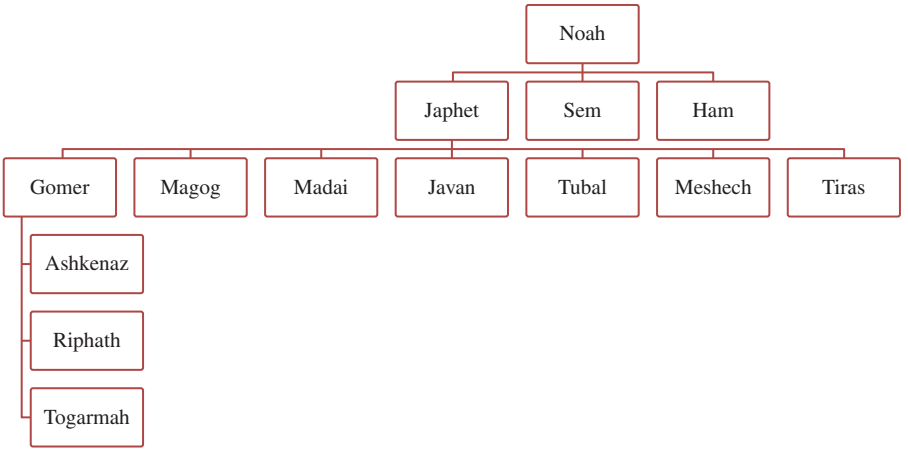

Figure 2. Partial genealogical table of the descendants of Noah after Gen. 10.

Besides 'Celtic', this language and its people were also called *Teutsch*.[27] As the author attached utmost importance to precise definitions and demarcations, we do learn exactly what he understood by Europa. Whereas the southern, western and northern boundaries of the continent are unambiguous through the presence of the Mediterranean, Atlantic and Arctic Ocean respectively[28], Cluverius takes his time to determine precisely Europe's eastern border. After 11 pages, he concludes that this border follows the Aegean Sea ('mare Aegaeum'), the Sea of Marmara ('Propontis', via the Hellespont), the Black Sea ('Pontus Euxinus', via the Bosphorus), the Sea of Azov ('palus Maeotis', via the Strait of Kerch), the River Don ('Tanais'), the River Wolga (via 'Perowlok', an older name for the region between present-day Kalach-na-Donu and Volgograd, see Figure 3), the Ural Mountains ('Rhymnici montes'), and the river Ob via Tyumen ('Tumen', see Figure 3). 'This border', he adds, 'also closely complies with the description of the classical authors.'[29]

An impressive part of Europe was inhabited by people originally speaking Celtic. Apart from the vast regions where this language was still in use (*Germania* and *Britannia*)[30], Ashkenaz' offspring originally controlled Gaul and Illyrium, as well as the Iberic peninsula, where it had meanwhile sunk into oblivion.[31] In Cluverius' eyes this shared language was a very strong and valid argument in favour of the mono-ethnicity of this spacious *Europa Celtica*.[32] But how did he substantiate his claim that the Celtic language was almost omnipresent in Europe? Cluverius proceeded in his usual, very systematic, fashion, stating:

> By ordering my arguments into five parts, I will now show that the five before-mentioned nations share the same language, being mutually distinct only in terms of dialect. First we have testimonies by ancient authors confirming my thesis. The second part relies on the names of the tribes belonging to these nations, whereas the third part is based on proper names of individuals. The fourth section deals with names denoting cities and villages. The fifth concentrates on other words designating diverse matters used by the before-mentioned nations and now still in vogue in the language of the Germans.[33]

Besides investigating and confronting the various views expressed by classical authors on the languages spoken in Europe, Cluverius devoted many a page to the analysis of ethnonyms, geonyms and common nouns documented in ancient texts.[34] Cluverius forcefully refused to walk in the footsteps of many of his peers, who more than once attempted to demonstrate that two tribes were in fact one and the same, only because their

Figure 3. Detail from the map: *Russiae, Moscoviae et Tartariae descriptio*. Anthony Jenkinson, 1562. The map was printed in Abraham Ortelius, *Theatrum orbis terrarum*, 1570. Source of this isolated map: Lithuania, Vilniaus Universiteto Biblioteka, VUB01_282417 (via *Europeana and manuscriptorium*, Public Domain).

names sounded similar (e.g. Gotes and Getes).[35] According to him, there was, however, a more sound etymology that should be followed. By segmenting names into recurrent *particula* (basic elements such as *-man-*, *-dun-*, *-mar-*), Cluverius claimed to have found an extensive set of distinctive components that were inherent to the Celtic language, yet absent in other languages.[36]

Although *Celtica* comprised a vast area, it did not encompass the entire territory of Europe as defined by Cluverius. We have already seen that he explained the lexical similarities between Slavonic, Greek, Latin and Germanic by regarding these words as remnants of the original pre-Babelic language. This implies that he did not consider Greek, Latin and Slavonic as languages belonging to the original *lingua Celtica*. While not thoroughly discussing languages other than 'Celtic'[37], Cluverius did actually underline the distinctive character of the Slavonic language[38]:

> The languages of the Muscovites, Russians as well as of the Poles, Bohemians [viz. Czechs], Croats, Bulgarians, Serbs, and also of the Wendish people (as they are called by the Germans)

> are mutually distinct to the point that they hardly understand each other. This does not alter the fact that all these nations belong to the same *species*, generally styled 'Slavic'. Their language, Slavic, being one and the same, is only different and dissimilar in terms of dialect.[39]

The apparent dissimilarities between the tongues belonging to the *lingua Celtica* were also explained in terms of dialectal differences. In so doing, Cluverius succeeded in demonstrating that the Welsh dialect, despite its rather different vocabulary, did take part in the *lingua Celtica*. He argued that unlike the other Celtic dialects, this particular one had preserved many words of the original *lingua Celtica*.[40] As a matter of fact, Cluverius took it for granted that 'dialects of all languages do undergo changes as a result of change in both place and time.'[41] He thus suggested that Irish and Basque were also members of the *lingua Celtica*, although he did not present any evidence to support this.[42] It seems that Cluverius also included the Finnish people in the Celts.[43] In sum, Cluverius sketched a largely monolingual map of Europe.

Cluverius' Europe in context

All this amounts to the question of how innovative or representative Cluverius' views on the widespread or Europe-wide *lingua Celtica* were. What role did 'Europe' play in contemporary linguistic work? And how did Cluverius relate to these works? Much to his colleagues' dismay, Cluverius was sparing in citing contemporary work. This is not tantamount to saying, however, that he was unfamiliar with ongoing theories on the history of languages.[44]

The sole scholar who is refuted at length is Jean Bodin. Cluverius devoted an entire chapter to challenging the ideas of Bodin, whose influential *Methodus ad facilem historiarum cognitionem* 'Method for the Easy Comprehension of History' had been published exactly 50 years before *Germania antiqua*. In a fairly complicated line of reasoning, Bodin had strongly opposed the idea that contemporary German was the heir to the ancient Gaulish language.[45] Instead, he had advanced a strong connection between the ancient Celtic language, Greek, and contemporary French. Today it might be extremely hazardous to make such an etymological connection. All the same, it is important to recall that in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries hardly anything was known about what is now known as the Celtic language group. Specimens of Irish and Welsh were barely available on the continent. And besides a few words mentioned by classical authors, the ancient language of Gaul remained a complete mystery. However, as argued by Joep Leerssen, precisely this lack of information was turned into 'a force in its own right'.[46]

From the beginning of the sixteenth century onwards we see that, by assiduously searching for a distinguished origin, many a scholar will present himself as a combative champion of his own language area. In view of the significant role the Celts had played in ancient history, both Germanic-speaking and French-speaking scholars were eager to claim the mysterious Celtic legacy so as to glorify the history of their own language and its speakers. Hence, one can safely say that by equating the Celts with the Germans Cluverius had entered into a heated and ideologically charged controversy. He suggested that Bodin's ideas originated from patriotic love rather than from rational discernment.[47] Needless to say, humanists were generally better at unmasking such patriotic tendencies in the books of colleagues than in their own work. Although more subtle than in the work of many of his contemporaries, Cluverius' patriotism was, as we will see, anything but absent.[48] He was also far from the first Germanic-speaking author who asserted that the ancient Celtic language only differed from Germanic in terms of dialect. Nor would he be the last. His originality, however, lies in spreading this Celto-Germanic language over a

vast area comprising the entire continent of Europe with the exclusion of some peripheral areas such as Italy, Greece and the territory inhabited by the speakers of Slavic. Apart from some shared remnants of the original Adamic language, this Celtic language had nothing in common with the other languages of the world. Cluverius thus turned Europe into a homogenous and distinctive entity in terms of its original language. And this original Celtic language, meanwhile lost in France and Spain due to the spread of Latin, was preserved best among the Germans, sometimes styled 'my Germans'.[49] One can state that in Cluverius' view precisely the vast diffusion of the prehistoric Celtic language directly contributed to the present-day glory of the Germanic language.[50]

Cluverius' geographical demarcation strongly recalls a fascinating historical map, entitled *Europam sive Celticam veterem* ('Europe or Old Celtica', see Figure 1), published for the first time by Abraham Ortelius (1527–98), the renowned inventor of atlantography (*Theatrum orbis terrarum*, 'Theater of the World', first edition: 1570), in the enlarged 1595 edition of the so-called *Parergon Theatri* (first edition: 1579), a supplement to the *Theatrum* presenting historical maps.[51] Much less studied than Ortelius' maps themselves are the accompanying texts *on verso*[52], in which Ortelius shows that Celtic is equal to Germanic, albeit without offering further details. Cluverius' ardent eulogy on the atlas-maker shows that there is no reason to doubt his familiarity with Ortelius' work.[53] Nevertheless, the scope of Ortelius' *Europa Celtica* was notably more extensive still than in Cluverius' work, where Italy, Greece and the Slavic area had been excluded. The reason for this presumably is that Cluverius concluded that the languages spoken in these regions were fundamentally different from Celto-Germanic. In addition, however, the exclusion of Rome and Greece from *Europa Celtica* was also attractive from an ideological point of view since Cluverius could thus create the image of, in Daniel Droixhe's words, 'a "white-warlike-winning-European" freed from the Mediterranean and classical ascendancy'.[54]

It is perhaps surprising to find that this distinctively European dimension was lacking in most of the language schemes outlined by Cluverius' colleagues working in Germany or in the Low Countries. On the one hand, a number of scholars designed genealogical models in which their native language played a main role on a global scale. The most notorious example of this kind was developed by the Antwerpian physician Johannes Goropius Becanus (1519–73), who figures among the small number of names explicitly mentioned by Cluverius, albeit it in a disparaging way.[55] Goropius claimed that Dutch had preserved all qualities ascribed to the Adamic language. By downgrading Hebrew, Latin and Greek as second-hand derivations of Dutch, he can be seen as the exponent of countless other authors eager to derive all of the world's languages from a single one, almost always the author's native tongue or Hebrew. On the other hand, some scholars stressed the considerable differences between the languages spoken in ancient Europe. A fine example of this tendency might well be Paul[l]us Merula's (1558–1607) voluminous *Cosmographia generalis* ('General Cosmography', 1605), since this work has, as its subtitle makes clear, a special focus on Europe (which in Merula's view deserved to be styled *Celtica*).[56] In an interesting chapter devoted to the language spoken by the contemporary as well as by the earlier Gauls ('*Gallorum, cum qui olim, tum qui hodie, lingua*', 419–33), this Leiden professor cautiously assumed that in the three parts of Gaul as distinguished by Caesar three entirely different languages had been spoken, viz. Welsh, Germanic and Basque respectively. By dividing the Celtic linguistic legacy into three parts, Merula expressed his wish to contribute to arriving at a compromise between the quarrelling parties (although it is less clear how his solution would have left French-speaking scholars satisfied).

Needless to say, Merula's compromise contributed nothing in particular to the argument in favour of Europe's original linguistic homogeneity. In the same work Merula had published a letter by Josephus Justus Scaliger that presented an even more serious attack on the idea of a European linguistic homogeneity. At Merula's request, Scaliger had compiled a genealogical scheme of the languages spoken in Europe.[57] He identified in total 11 *matrices*, or language families. Besides four major groups (Slavic, Greek, Latin and Germanic) he distinguished seven minor groups (Albanian, Turkish, Finnish, Hungarian, Irish, Old Brittonic and Basque). Between these *matrices*, he boldly stated, 'there is no kinship, neither in words nor in analogy.' Scaliger's reluctance to connect different language groups testifies to his aversion to scholars such as Goropius.

Although Scaliger had left room for doubt in previous works[58], this letter became more influential after its partly revised publication by Isaac Casaubon (1559–1614) in 1610. Scaliger's linguistic division of Europe reverberated in countless 'citations', adaptations and elaborations. A striking remark by Johann Bödiker suggests that such a restriction to Europe could have far-reaching epistemological consequences. Having surveyed Scaliger's 11 *matrices*, he stated that the German language was the most ancient living language, if seen from a European angle. He argued that German, more than Slavonic, corresponded to Ancient Greek in that both German and Ancient Greek shared the article, which was lacking in Slavonic and Latin. However, by discarding this geographical restriction, Bödiker argued, languages without the article could be regarded as the elder ones, 'since they corresponded more with the Hebrew language in Asia'.[59] The author thus seems to make a language's antiquity dependent on the geographical scope adopted. Yet how did Cluverius respond to Scaliger's views? It is indeed rather unlikely that Cluverius would not have been familiar with the ideas of his own mentor. But although Cluverius' *lingua Germanica* is separated from Latin, Greek and Slavonic, it had absorbed several of Scaliger's *matrices minores*. The multilingualism that had so impregnated Scaliger's European map was banned to the edges of Cluverius' Europe, whose heartland was fundamentally monolingual.

So far we have seen that Cluverius' European historical monolingualism contrasted both with 'global' monolingualism as defended by Goropius or champions of Hebrew and Scaliger's radical European historical multilingualism. We might expect to encounter a more Eurocentric approach in still another linguistic model, which turned out to become a very promising one. In the 1640s, the Leiden scholars Johannes Elichmann (1601–39), Claude de Saumaise (1588–1653) and Marcus Zuerius Boxhornius (1612–53) developed the so-called 'Scythian theory'. Lexical similarities between a restricted set of languages including Latin, Greek, Slavonic and Germanic, yet excluding Hebrew, were accounted for by invoking a common source, most often styled 'Scythian', thus somehow foreshadowing the later triumph of the Indo-European language sciences.[60] Much as the geographical range of these Scythian languages corresponded with the area of Europe, this overlap was still not exact, most notably because of Persian figuring prominently as one of the Scythian languages. Some champions of this Scythian hypothesis did not fail to highlight this 'Eurasian' connection in very clear terms.[61] And even the prominent occurrence of 'Europe' in the title of treatises discussing the Scythian hypothesis does not seem to imply an increased importance attached to Europe as a relevant linguistic unity or category. In the dissertations *De lingua vetustissima Europae, Scytho-celtica et Gothica* ('On Scytho-celtic and Gothic, the Most Ancient Language of Europe', 1686) and *Parallelismus et convenientia XII linguarum ex matrice Scytho-Celtica, Europae* ('Parallelism and Convenience between Twelve Languages of Europe Stemming from the Scytho-Celtic Matrix', 1697), both supervised by the Wittenberg professor Georg Caspar

Kirchmaier (1635–1700), little or nothing is said about Europe itself. In other words, we see that scholars discussing the history of languages make use of Europe as a convenient geographical delimitator in their argument rather than as an inherently significant constituency. Both Europe's internal historical multilingualism and the genealogical connection to Asia were generally acknowledged.[62]

This leads to the question of in what respect Cluverius was exceptional. To the best of my knowledge, other scholars arguing that Europe, historically speaking, constituted a distinctive unit in terms of language were mainly representatives of the so-called Celtomaniac tradition, viz. scholars eager to identify one single language (French or German, most often dependent on their native language) or a group of languages (e.g. Basque, Irish and Welsh) as the original language of *Europa Celtica*.[63] Many of them followed in Cluverius' footsteps, albeit without maintaining his methodological and geographical rigidity. Under the heading 'The Titan Language Universal in Europe', the Oxford antiquarian Francis Wise (1695–1767) stated:

> It is more than probable, that one common language once prevailed over all Europe; nor can any other period be assigned for an universal language, than this of the Titan empire. The remains of such a language are still found in various parts of Europe; and those parts are clearly corners, and hiding places, where people having no commerce but with themselves, it was secured from the inroads of later languages. Such are the mountains of Biscay, the retreat of the old Cantabrian [...] The old Gallic gave way to the Teutonic, but is still spoken in Armorica, or Bass Bretany. The British sunk under the Roman yoak; and would have been utterly extirpated by the Saxons, had it not taken refuge in Wales and Cornwal [...] The Highlands of Scotland [...] and above all Ireland, where it is thought to be preserved most uncorrupt: at least I have reason to think, that the Irish agrees the nearest with the old Cantabrian. These all differ from each other a little in dialect, but by undeniable marks appear to have sprung from one common root, and That a sister dialect of the Hebrew. Antiquaries are sufficiently justified in calling these dialects Celtic, because they are the first known language in Europe or Celtica. Perhaps they may deserve a much higher title, namely that of the Universal Language of the postdiluvian world.[64]

This example illustrates that at least some Celtomaniacs were not reluctant to promote Celtic as the original language of an area going far beyond the borders of Europe. Celtomania also impacted on the Scythian theory – and it did so, to a certain extent, from the very beginning. In its most fruitful perspective, Scythian was a prehistoric, undocumented source that had given way to different equivalent daughter languages such as Latin, Greek, Persian, Germanic and Irish. By (almost) equating this source language to Germano-Celtic, the Celtomaniac interpretation introduced a clear hierarchy between the different daughter languages, since one of the daughters (Germanic) was seen as almost identical to the mother ('Scytho-Celtic'). This was also, in a nutshell, the interpretation adopted by Johann Augustin Egenolff (1683–1729), who heavily relied on Cluverius and strongly emphasised the importance of Germano-Celtic as the original language of Europe.[65]

The Flemish scholar Adriaan van Schrieck (1560–1621), finally, deserves our attention for two reasons. Not only did he also attach particular importance to 'Europe' as a distinctive linguistic unity[66], he had a very frank opinion on Cluverius' work as well. In 1614 Schrieckius had published a voluminous history of Europe, authored in Dutch and covering a timespan from the first origins until the reign of Charlemagne. Its preface, written in Latin, aimed at demonstrating the superiority of his native Dutch language, which would be surpassed only by Hebrew. Undoubtedly much to his own frustration, Schrieckius is therefore often considered a 'light' version of Goropius Becanus (who had subordinated even Hebrew to Dutch). One year later the *Monita* appeared, a concise

addition to his previous work elaborating on his somewhat startling and confusing linguistic ideas, for which he now hoped to gain a more international readership. Schrieckius' reading of Cluverius' *Germania antiqua*, published hardly one year after the *Monita*, must have stimulated him to write still another work devoted to the same topic.

In the *Adversaria* (1620) Schrieckius time and again attacked Cluverius, whom he accused of largely having plagiarised Schrieckius' 1614 and 1615 work.[67] There are indeed striking conceptual parallels. More outspokenly than Cluverius, Schrieckius had asserted that the entire territory of Europe was deeply characterised through its Celtic substance. This *fundus* was also styled Japhetic, Scythian or 'Barbaric', and turned out to be equal to Dutch.[68] From a methodological point of view too, Schrieckius, like Cluverius, preferred segmenting proper names into smaller units. Nevertheless, the differences in approach and method between both scholars are unmistakable. While Schrieckius' work misses the ethnographical and empirical basis of Cluverius' *Germania antiqua*, it is overloaded with references to Hebrew. Needless to say, this Hebrew connection, 'unforgivably' absent in Cluverius' book[69], weakens considerably the linguistic distinctiveness of Europe in Schrieckius' work.

Outlook: one language for Europe?

How prominent a place then did the notion of 'Europe' occupy in sixteenth- through eighteenth-century debates on linguistic genealogy? Our survey showed that Europe's unity was not articulated in terms of the historical and genealogical connections between its many languages. Cluverius and Egenolff were the most significant exceptions to this general pattern. As recent work by Paul Stock on the idea of a European race suggests, this situation had not changed by 1800. Whereas Stock found several authors who argued in favour of one distinctive European race, he also noticed that only a few claimed that one distinctive language had originally united Europe.[70] Perhaps this silence regarding linguistic unity was due to the fact that the notion of linguistic diversity itself sat uneasily with the idea of one single European race.

In what follows I will offer some final remarks, which are suggestions for further research or open questions that at the moment defy definite conclusions. First a methodological remark. One finds, perhaps surprisingly, that both the attention paid and the importance attached to 'Europa' as a relevant linguistic unit are significantly more pronounced in recent secondary literature studying the history of linguistic learning than in the source-texts themselves. The following case may illustrate this. It has been repeatedly stated that, by coining the term *lingua Japhetica*, the German specialist in Ethiopian studies, Hiob Ludolf (1624–1704), designated the common source of the *European* languages.[71] A look at the source-text reveals, however, that Ludolf, who limited his examples to Latin, German and Greek, did not use the word 'Europa' nor any of its derivations. In his other letters, however, Ludolf quite often mentioned 'Europa', but to the best of my knowledge not in relation to a language group.

This raises some broader issues. Do we run the risk of creating a historiographical myth by projecting words and concepts into Ludolf's text that are not there? Or can we safely equate his 'Japhetic' more or less with 'our' European?[72] It is pertinent to pose these questions, as one should recall that ever since the 1950s the importance of the notion of Europe has steadily grown in both political and daily-life discourse. This is why it is very difficult for present-day researchers to come to terms with the very fact that about 1000 CE 'Europe did not exist', as Charles Tilly has dryly noted.[73] Even by 1700 – as Peter Burke

concluded his paper on the early-modern idea of Europe – general awareness of Europe was rather weak. If only for this reason, he justly warned, we should be aware of projecting our present-day conception of Europe onto the early-modern period.[74]

Again, further questions remain. When and in what circles did European consciousness really emerge? And what role, if any, did language play in this process of consciousness-raising? For the present purpose, only a partial answer to the second question can be offered, drawing from the answers others have proposed for the first. Many scholars agree that Europe had begun to discover itself in the course of the sixteenth century, when, in the words of John R. Hale, 'the word Europe first became part of common linguistic usage and the continent itself was given a securely map-based frame of reference, a set of images that established its identity in pictorial terms, and a triumphal ideology that overrode its internal contradictions.'[75] At the beginning of his often-cited chapter, 'The Discovery of Europe', Hale further claims:

> When in 1623 Francis Bacon threw off the phrase 'we Europeans', he was assuming that his readers knew where 'Europeans' were, who they were, and what, in spite of national differences, they shared. This was a phrase, and an assumption, that could not have been used with such confidence a century and a half before.[76]

To fully understand this claim, it is pivotal to understand exactly *what* these self-proclaimed Europeans shared. We have already seen that only very few scholars believed in a shared linguistic descent that distinguished Europeans from Asians or Africans. More often, they cited religion as Europe's chief binding factor. At the same time, it has been suggested that the rise of Europe in seventeenth-century discourse must precisely be seen in connection with the decline of the use of 'Christendom'. Christianity was indeed endangered and challenged ever since the Reformation and the sixteenth-century religious wars.

In comparison to the older notion of Christendom, it seems that the new notion of 'Europe' was primarily of a more secular and scholarly nature. We can see that a phrase such as Bacon's emphatic 'we Europeans' (*nos Europaei*) is most often used in discussions of members of the *Respublica litterarum* regarding extra-European matters and cultures.[77] Its increased usage may thus be seen to testify to the gradual process of a globalising and secularising world. It is also in these contexts that 'European language' is used as a significant category of reference. Confronted with missionary reports on exotic Asian or American languages, scholars seem to become sensitive to the relative similarities between the languages spoken in Europe. All the same, they do not account for these similarities by invoking a common historical descent for these languages – and only rarely do they explain these similarities in terms of a shared set of structural linguistic features.[78] In sharp contrast to this, scholarly discourse on 'European language' generally seems to rely on a more incidental basis, i.e. 'familiarity'. When discussing exotic source-texts, scholars often inquired whether these texts were available in a 'European language' or not, thus using it as an umbrella or short-cut term for 'whatever language that is familiar to scholars of the *Respublica Litterarum*, e.g. French, German, Italian, or Latin'.

In connection with this, we see that some scholars openly expressed the need for indicating a language that was shared by all members of this European Republic of Letters and that could thus warrant a linguistic unity that was, more than rooted in history, designed for the future.[79] Needless to say, up to the seventeenth century there was no need to create such a language, since it already existed in the form of Latin. Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646–1716) regarded the language as *lingua Europaea universalis et durabilis ad posteritatem* ('the universal European language, permanent to posterity').[80] Once

Latin's monopoly started to fade[81], however, both champions of French and German came to the fore.[82] While he usually wrote in Latin or French, Leibniz argued that German was the most suitable living European language for expressing philosophical ideas.[83] Leibniz was also one of those many seventeenth-century scholars who attempted to create artificial philosophical or scientific languages. Although designed by European scholars, these languages had clear global aspirations.[84]

The discussion initiated in the seventeenth century continues today. Does Europe have to cherish its linguistic diversity or should it embrace monolingualism? And if so, should we adopt English as European *lingua franca*, or should we opt for an alternative, e.g. Latin or Esperanto?[85] The issue, having far-reaching historical roots, is still far from settled.

Acknowledgements

I am indebted to the invaluable remarks given by the guest editors of this issue and by two anonymous reviewers.

Notes

1. This booklet was found thanks to a reference in an unpublished paper by Wiebke Hohberger (Universität Hamburg).
2. Council of Europe, *Travel the Universe of Greater Europe*, 9.
3. Council of Europe, *Travel the Universe of Greater Europe*, 12.
4. Romaine, "Politics and Policies of Promoting Multilingualism" (117) with references to recent official documents dealing with European language policy. These official regulations are also dealt with by Trabant ("Sprachenvielfalt"), whose contribution focuses on the dynamics of Europe's multi- and monolingualism throughout time (with the main emphasis, however, on the present).
5. This section partly draws on Van Hal, *Moedertalen en taalmoeders*, 281–98.
6. Only a very small number of letters by Cluverius that could complement Heinsius' account have been preserved. For more details on Cluverius' life and work, see Fockema Andreae, "Philippus Cluverius;" Partsch, "Philipp Clüver;" Otterspeer, *Het bolwerk van de vrijheid*, 101–3; Van der Heijden, "Philippus Cluverius and Dutch Cartography."
7. See Heinsius, "Oratio," 126–7: "Linguas tenuit quam plurimas. Praeter eas, quae ab eruditis vindicantur, Belgicam, Bohemicam, Polonicam, Italicam, Ungaricam, Britannicam, Gallicam, ut in orbe suo nusquam peregrinus, et ubique natus videretur."
8. Cluverius, *Germania antiqua*, 51: "In Italia cum quondam cum Florentinis quibusdam, haud indoctis viris, simulque cum quodam doctore Bononiensi iter facerem; multaque mihi cum Florentinis esset super rebus Italiae, sermoneque Italico dissertatio: Bononiensis, dialectum illorum non satis percipiens, identidem me interrogabat, quidnam dicerent. Cui ego, non sine risu, respondebam, inique eum facere, quod ipse homo Italus me peregrinum Italici sermonis interpretem sibi postularet."
9. I have not been able to trace the Dutch/German ("Germanice") version of this book mentioned by the editor Henning Witte in the bibliography following Heinsius' obituary speech (129). A second edition followed in 1631, a revised edition by Johann Buno in 1663.
10. See especially Krebs, *A Most Dangerous Book*.
11. As quoted in Considine, *Dictionaries*, 114.
12. See Van de Waal, *Drie eeuwen vaderlandsche geschied-uitbeelding*, 152.
13. See Droixhe, *L'étymon des dieux*, 38; Krebs, *A Most Dangerous Book*; Considine, *Dictionaries*.
14. Cluverius, *Germania antiqua*, 49: "Argumenta autem, sive indicia, quibus, duas pluresve nationes eiusdem esse generis atque originis, dignoscere queas, duabus potissimum in rebus constituunt: altera in lingua, sive sermone, altera in moribus, ac vivendi ratione;" cfr. also ibid., 27.
15. See Van Hal, "Sprachen, die Geschichte schreiben."
16. Cluverius, *Germania antiqua*, 73: "Unus cum fuerit initio rerum in terris sermo, quo omnes pariter inter se, ante Babylonis fundamenta, usi sunt mortales [...]."
17. For the importance of Augustine, see Eskhult, "Augustine and the Primeval Language." For relevant references to the Greek and Latin Early Christian tradition, see Van Rooy, "'Πόθεν

οὖν ἡ τοσαύτη διαφωνία;'" and Denecker et al., "Language Origin, Language Diversity, and Language Classification in Early Christian Latin Authors" respectively. Borst, *Der Turmbau von Babel*, is a monumental account of the exegetical strategies with regard to the story of Babel's Tower.

18. Cluverius, *Germania antiqua*, 74.
19. Ibid., 73–4; see also pp. 38, 216–7.
20. Cluverius, *Germania antiqua*, 38: "Ab una origine, unaque et eadem stirpe omnes pariter in universum promanasse orbem terrarum linguas, nemo facile negaverit."
21. Ibid., 38; see also ibid., 73.
22. Ibid., 112; 198; 219ff.
23. Ibid., 74.
24. Ibid., 38, 73.
25. Ashkenaz is styled "*omnium parens conditorque Celtarum*" (Ibid., 47).
26. "gentem nostram non posterioribus demum, post diluvium divisionemque linguarum, saeculis vel ex Graecia, vel ex Persia, vel aliunde primam duxisse originem; sed mox ab ipsa linguarum divisione, gentiumque dispersione, apud aedificationem urbis Babylonicae facta, per Aschenazen, Noachi pronepotem, una cum nova lingua in eam Europae partem fuisse deductam, quae postea Celtica dicta fuit" (ibid., 85).
27. Ibid., 84.
28. Ibid., 10.
29. "idemque veterum descriptioni quamproxime respondet" (ibid., 21).
30. Ibid., 72.
31. Ibid., 21.
32. Ibid., 72.
33. Cluverius, *Germania antiqua*, 49: "Nunc sermonem praedictis quinque nationibus fuisse eundem, dialectis solummodo varie distinctum, argumentis quadrifariam [in the 1631 edition corrected into "quinquefariam", p. 39] partitis ostendam. Prima erunt ex veterum auctorum testimoniis, quibus id liquido affirmatur. Altera ex populorum per easdem v nationes appellationibus. Tertia ex privorum hominum nominibus propriis. Quarta ex oppidorum vicorumque vocabulis; quinta ex aliis variarum rerum vocabulis, quibus olim praedictae nationes omnes inter se usae sunt, nunc vero apud Germanos in vulgari sermone durant."
34. Cf. Metcalf, "Philipp Clüver and his *Lingua Celtica*," 103 and Van Hal, "From Alauda to Zythus."
35. See Cluverius, *Germania antiqua*, 38 and III, 91; Metcalf, "Philipp Clüver and his *Lingua Celtica*," 93–4.
36. Cluverius, *Germania antiqua*, 66.
37. Cf. Metcalf, "Philipp Clüver and his *Lingua Celtica*," 100.
38. See also Cluverius, *Germania antiqua*, III, 213. French, Italian and Spanish, being mutually unintelligible, are seen as belonging to the Latin group (cf. *Germania antiqua*, 35, 52).
39. Cluverius, *Germania antiqua*, 52: "Moscovitarum hodie Russorumque, item Polonorum, Boiohaemorum, Crovatorum, Bulgarorum, Serviorum, item eorum, quos Germani Venedos, ac Vinidos in Germania appellant, tam discrepantes inter se sunt linguae, uti alteri alteros parum admodum intelligant. Nihilo minus tamen omnes istae nationes unius sunt generis, Slavi in universum dicti; linguaque eorum Slavica una atque eadem, dialectis tantum varie distincta."
40. Ibid., 72.
41. "Variantur quidpe omnium linguarum dialecti, ut locorum, sic temporum diversitate" (Ibid., 52).
42. See Van Hal, "*Moedertalen*," 289.
43. Cf. Cluverius, *Germania antiqua*, 51.
44. Van Hal, "*Moedertalen*," 293 offers some implicit evidence of Cluverius' familiarity with contemporary work.
45. See Demonet-Launay, *Les voix du signe*, 366–7.
46. Leerssen, *Mere Irish and Fíor-Ghael*, 92. See also Van Hal, "From Alauda to Zythus," and the references given there.
47. Cluverius, *Germania antiqua*, 37: "Haec tamen, veluti in laudem atque gloriam patrii soli, non ex animi iudicio, sed amoris indulgentia prodidit."
48. Symptomatically, a posthumous 1685 dissertation by Georg Stiernhielm, programmatically entitled *Anticluverius*, argued that an improper form of patriotism had taken possession of Cluverius ("praepostero in patriam amore raptus") in writing his *Germania antiqua*

(Stiernhielm, *Anticluverius*, 2). (The editor of the posthumous dissertation seems to have been less familiar with Cluverius' ideas, judged by the erroneous first name that had crept into the subtitle.) In his preface to the Gothic Bible edition, Stiernhielm was much more positive about Cluverius' general ideas (see Stiernhielm, "De linguarum origine praefatio"). See also Neville, "Gothicism and Early Modern Historical Ethnography," 222–31 and McKendry, "J.G. Sparwenfeld and Celtic Linguistics in Seventeenth-Century Sweden," 183.

49. See e.g. Cluverius, *Germania antiqua*, 37, 103.
50. See also Droixhe, "Ossian, Hermann and the Jew's-Harp Images," 23.
51. The map is numbered 189 in Van den Broecke, *Ortelius' Theatrum orbis terrarum*. Lorenzo Hervás y Panduro, *Catálogo de las lenguas de las naciones conocidas* (7) made the same link between Ortelius and Cluverius. For more information on this first historical atlas and on this map, see Tolias, "Glose, contemplation, et méditation," esp. 170–1.
52. Marcel van den Broecke, who has studied these texts in depth, rightly states that the reason why these texts "have never been studied in the course of 450 years will probably remain an enigma" (*Ortelius' Theatrum orbis terrarum*, 279).
53. Cluverius, *Germania antiqua*, *Praefatio* sig. (.) 3.
54. Droixhe, "Ossian, Hermann and the Jew's-Harp Images," 22–3.
55. See e.g. Cluverius, *Germania antiqua*, 9, 97, 211.
56. Merula, *Cosmographia*, 266.
57. It seems likely that Scaliger had limited his account to the languages spoken in Europe because Merula's work had a special focus on this continent. This is why it is less plausible that by applying this geographical restriction Scaliger attempted purposively to circumvent the thorny question of Hebrew as being the original Adamic language (as suggested in e.g. Swiggers and Desmet, "L'élaboration de la linguistique comparative," 131).
58. See the overview in Van Hal, "Quam enim periculosa sit ea via..."
59. Bödiker and Frisch, *Grund-Sätze der Teutschen Sprache*, 184: "Die Teutsche Sprache ist in Europa die älteste. Sie kommt der Griechischen viel näher, als die andern, welches man nur am Artikel sehen kan, welchen die Sclavonische Sprachen nicht haben, und daher mehr mit der Lateinischen überein kommen. Man muß es aber nach der Grammatikalischen Art verstehen, und in Europa bleiben, sonst, wo man den Ursprung ansieht, sind die älter, so keinen Artikel haben, weil sie mehr mit der Hebräischen in Asia übereinkommen."
60. See e.g. Considine, "Why Was Claude de Saumaise Interested in the Scythian Hypothesis?" and the references given therein.
61. See e.g. Wachter, *Glossarium Germanicum*, *Praefatio* sig. b2 and Boxhornius, *Originum Gallicarum liber*, 95. Europe takes more centre stage in a remark by Winckler, *Hypomnemata philologica et critica*, 4.
62. See Adelung, *Umständliches Lehrgebäude*, 11–12.
63. See Williams, "Celtomania" for an introduction to this topic, most often associated to France.
64. Wise, *Some Enquiries Concerning the First Inhabitants, Language, Religion, Learning and Letters of Europe*, 29–31. See also Raynal, *Histoire philosophique et politique des établissements et du commerce des Européens dans les deux Indes*, 167, and Cleland, *The Way to Things by Words*.
65. See Egenolff, *Historie der Teutschen Sprache*, *passim*.
66. See Swiggers, "Adrianus Schrieckius. De la langue des Scythes à l'Europe linguistique" and Van Hal, *Moedertalen*, 249–77 and the references given there. See Sc[h]rieckius, *Van t'beghin der eerster volcken* and Sc[h]rieckius, *Monitorum secundorum libri V*.
67. See Schrieckius, *Adversariorum*, 78. Also Petrus Scriverius (1576–1660) was disappointed after finding out that his correspondent Johannes Isacus Pontanus (1571–1639), author of *Itinerarium Galliae Narbonensis* (1606), was not mentioned in Cluverius' *Germania antiqua.* See Langereis, *Geschiedenis als ambacht*, 228.
68. According to Borst, *Turmbau*, 1224, this is the first occurrence of "Japhetic" related to a certain language.
69. See Schrieckius, *Adversariorum*, 67–8 and *passim*. Besides the ideas stolen from him, Schrieckius argued, Cluverius' book was full of errors.
70. Stock, "'Almost a Separate Race,'" esp. 26, 29.
71. See e.g. Borst, *Turmbau*, 1475; Olender, "Europe, or How to Escape Babel," 19; Mueller, "Leibniz as a Linguist," 378.

72. It is tempting to assume that "Japhetic" automatically implies the notion of Europe. Although Noach's son Japhet is often associated with Europe (even to the point that Guillaume Postel has proposed to restyle "Europe" into "Japetia"; see Borst, *Turmbau*, 1356), many a scholar has highlighted that Japhet's family was spread over both Europe and Asia. A quick look at the drafts of Ludolf's letters preserved at Universitätsbibliothek Johann Christian Senckenberg (Frankfurt am Main; Ms Ff. H. Ludolf II 33) has revealed another interesting letter (dated 28 December 1697) in which Ludolf mentions the "Japhetic language" without (literally) mentioning Europe.
73. Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, European and States*, 38.
74. Burke, "Did Europe Exist before 1700?," 27.
75. Hale, *The Civilization of Europe in the Renaissance*, 3.
76. Ibid.
77. This is confirmed by a targeted search in EEBO and Google books.
78. See e.g. Frommann and Panzer, *Dissertatio philosophico philologica de syntaxi linguae et praecipue Ebraicae*, XXV. See also Trabant, "Sprachenvielfalt," 270.
79. For the connection between Western Europe and the *Respublica litterarum*, see Bots and Waquet, *la république des lettres*, 63–90 (in particular 70–2).
80. Leibniz, *Correspondenz*, 441.
81. See the references in Van Hal, *Moedertalen*, 54.
82. For French, see for instance *Avertissement du libraire* in Leroy and Restaut, *Traité de l'orthographe françoise*: "Notre Langue, que l'on peut nommer avec justice la Langue de toute l'Europe;" Diderot, "Encyclopédie," 354: "qui s'étend de jour en jour, & qui est presque devenu la langue universelle de l'Europe." Borst, *Turmbau*, 1245 explains that Bodin had tried to promote French as an alternative for Latin as early as in the sixteenth century.
83. Leibniz, "Dissertatio de stilo Philosophico Marii Nizolii," 88. See Pombo, *Leibniz and the Problem of a Universal Language*, 132–7.
84. See Pombo, *Leibniz*; Maat, *Philosophical Languages in the Seventeenth Century. Dalgarno, Wilkins, Leibniz*; Eco, *The Search for the Perfect Language*.
85. Cf. Romaine, "Politics and Policies of Promoting Multilingualism in the European Union." For Esperanto, see the lively discussion "Should Esperanto be the language of Europe?" at www.debatingeurope.eu/2011/08/03/. Although Esperanto was conceived as a global international language, it was criticised for the rather Eurocentric basis of both its lexicon and grammar. A recent plea for Latin as the language of Europe was made by Angelino, "Quid dicendum de methodo linguae Latinae docendae."

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